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Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 3:03 PM  
To: Grindstaff, Joe@DeltaCouncil  
Cc: Macaulay, Terry@DeltaCouncil; Alvarez, Eric@DeltaCouncil  
Subject: Risk Management Policy Recommendations

Hi Joe, at our panel discussion on risk management in Clarksburg the Chairman requested that panelists submit recommendations for policy statements that the DSC could adopt to guide future government action. Since that was a specific request for input directed to us personally I am forwarding two recommendations directly to you for delivery to the Chairman and Council. I don't believe that a response to such a specific request falls in the realm of a general public comment. Thanks Ron Baldwin San Joaquin OES

# **Recommended Policy Statements for Delta Emergency Preparedness**

**Ronald E. Baldwin, Director  
San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services**

At the March 11th Delta Stewardship Council panel discussion on risk management the Chairman requested panelists to submit recommended policy statements for DSC consideration. The following are two recommended DSC policy statements to guide future government action to reduce risk.

**Policy Statement: All future actions to reduce risk in the Delta should be based on a single comprehensive risk statement describing the continuum of potential risks to the Delta from the most probable to the less probable to those that are possible but have never been experienced. In a world of limited resources and less than perfect foresight, it is a mistake to treat any one potential risk to the Delta in isolation in policy documents or actual planning.**

Emergency managers actually responsible for protecting the public operate in a world of limited resources and time. Fixation on one risk that might affect the Delta, regardless of its probability or potential severity, reduces the odds that the emergency response community will be as effective as possible for what actually happens next. The best approach to planning with limited resources is to address most probable risks first while keeping the response needs of less probable events in mind. In this way, the ER community becomes very good at responding to the events that will most probably occur next while at the same time putting in place many of the systems and protocols that would be needed to respond to less probable or more hypothetical events. Once the ER community is as prepared as possible for the most probable events then unique aspects of less probable, or more hypothetical, events are more fully addressed. This less than perfect approach to emergency planning in a less than perfect world offers the best odds that when the next disaster arrives the response will be as effective as possible. A lesson from the decade long fixation on terrorism planning and Katrina.

**Policy Statement: Flood fight operations (those actions taken to prevent levee failure or reduce the extent, depth, or duration of a flood in the event of levee failure) are of first importance in a flood event and deserve special consideration in planning. Given the high costs associated with such response, and the critical need for the most rapid and effective response possible, funding for such response should be pre-established outside of normal jurisdictional budgets to avoid bureaucratic delays in its acquisition or use. Flood fight operations and use of these funds should be controlled by qualified joint commands operating as close to potential problems as possible without**

**the need of undue referral to higher or more distant levels of authority to obtain action.**

In a flood the most important task is clearly to prevent or reduce direct damages or threat to life and safety. Therefore, flood fight operations become of prime importance and must be as efficient and effective as possible. The history of military and disaster operations and other human crisis activities has shown that the most effective response is achieved when the level of command closest to the problem is empowered to address the problem without reference to more distant levels of command. In order to achieve this efficiency in emergency response, and avoid the bureaucratic delays incumbent in the current method of funding flood fight operations, an adequate independent response fund, separate from day-to-day jurisdictional operational budgets, should be created and made available for use by joint flood fight commands established in an emergency in the field as close as possible to potential levee problems. These commands would be made up of the best qualified staff drawn from reclamation district, local and State agencies thereby ensuring the fastest, most efficient, response possible to levee problems under the general guidance only of higher authorities.

## **The Bold Vision for Future Delta Flood Fight Response**

1. Complete Flood Contingency Maps and related Preliminary Engineering Designs for the entire Delta.
2. All levels of government officially approve the maps and agree to agency/jurisdiction pre-assignments for general flood fight support missions and for implementing elements of identified response options to foreseeable levee failure scenarios.
3. Establish local unified flood fight commands and the Delta multi-agency coordination group as legal entities through legislation or agreement that would give these unified commands legal authority and jurisdiction to respond to levees. Disaster claims can be processed through the unified command and not through each agency's budget and separate bureaucracies. All jurisdictions would supply the personnel to staff these commands. DWR, RDs, and/or County would provide unified commanders.
4. Establish a Levee Emergency Response Fund that will empower local unified commands to act on levee problems at their level. This fund would be outside of agency budgets and thereby avoid internal budget quandaries. The fund would be initially established with Delta bond funds (probably less than 2% of the bonds). The fund would be maintained by putting FEMA disaster reimbursement from major disasters back in the fund. Shortages would be made up through a "10-year contribution plan" by all levels of government.
5. Establish local and regional evacuation and shelter systems using the more user friendly mapping format to display response cues, critical information, and space for recording real time decisions.
6. Establish a Delta regional flood response authority independent of any one agency (through the Delta Protection Commission or independent JPA?) that would maintain regional (multi-county) plans, oversee administration of the Emergency Fund, and support the regional response systems when activated.